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# Christianity and Crisis

*A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion*

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## The Godly and the Godless

THE National Catholic Welfare Council has made a statement entitled "The Christian in Action," which has the primary purpose of challenging the Supreme Court decision which outlawed the "released time" religious program in the public schools of Illinois. The Bishops centered their criticism on the reliance of the Court upon Jefferson's metaphor "the absolute wall of separation between church and state." This metaphor, according to the Catholic bishops, cannot clarify the First Amendment which enjoins that "Congress shall pass no laws respecting the establishment of religion or the suppression thereof," since the meaning of the amendment is perfectly clear. It means that there shall be no "established church" no "state religion" and, therefore, that no religion shall be given preferential status by the state. It does not, therefore, prohibit cooperation between church and state so long as this is done in terms of complete equality.

This journal has previously outlined a similar criticism of the Supreme Court decision and expressed the conviction, stated in the dissenting opinion, that "a rule of law cannot be drawn from a metaphor." We are perhaps a little more sensitive than the Catholic Bishops to the fact that it is very difficult to achieve a policy which will be regarded as fair by all religious sects and by those who have no religious loyalty. It is clear, for instance, that Catholics would hope ultimately to secure the public support of parochial schools under their interpretation of the First Amendment. This would be regarded as unfair by most of the Protestant sects which have no parochial schools. If complete fairness were to be achieved it would mean the establishment of parochial schools by various Protestant sects, a policy which would wreck the unity of our public school system. It would, granted the religious pluralism of the American culture, also endanger the unity of the people. We do not believe that the increased secularization of our culture ought to be the price of that unity; but we do have some understanding of the viewpoint of those who fear religious divisiveness in our community. Despite these apprehensions it is important that Protestant agree-

ment with the Catholic position should be expressed, as far as that agreement runs

It is equally important that we should, from the standpoint of the Protestant faith, express our disagreement with a basic presupposition of the Catholic position. The Bishops express that presupposition in these words: "The failure to center life in God is secularism, which . . . is the most deadly menace to our Christian and American way of living." There is a great truth but also a considerable error in this simple condemnation of secularism. The truth is that secularism, in both its liberal and its Marxist variety, promised the world a utopia of perfect justice, if only the irrational prejudices of religion could be eliminated. This utopia was not realized, not only because the Western world is involved in a deadly conflict between the two versions of secular idealism, but also because each misinterpreted the human situation. Each believed that the evils of human nature and the injustices of society were due either to a simple remedial ignorance which more education would eliminate; or to the institution of property, which the abolition of that institution would overcome. Neither recognized the profoundly idolatrous tendency in the heart of man, the tendency to set himself up as God and to defy the common good. Catholicism usually makes the mistake of regarding secularism as morally cynical, that is, as acknowledging no law except the good of each individual or nation. Actually only a very subordinate strain of secular thought is morally cynical. Nazism was the final fruit of that strain of thought. Most secular thought is morally sentimental. It believes in generally valid principles of justice; but it underestimates the recalcitrance of the human heart. It does not know that though men may "delight in the law of God after the inward man," there is yet a "law in their members which wars against the law that is in their mind."

In our Christian apologetic against secularism it is, therefore, not enough to teach men that there is a God; but rather that the true God with whom all men are ultimately engaged, is our enemy before he is our redeemer. We cannot know His mercy

if we do not acknowledge His judgments upon the inclination of all men and nations to set themselves up as God. But this God, who is revealed to the Christian through Christ, is not simply an ally of the Christians against the secularists. His judgments fall as severely upon Christians as upon secularists, precisely because the Christian faith in God is no guarantee against the corruption of using God as an instrument of our interests and of claiming the "law of God" or the "natural law" as a rationalization of our claims against the claims of others. That is why Jeremiah insists that the judgments of God fall upon both the "circumcised and the uncircumcised" and why John the Baptist warns against the complacency of those who think they are virtuous because they are "the children of Abraham"; and suggests that "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Translated this means, that the "elect" must have some contrite recognition of the fact that the truth of God is frequently stated by those who do not know God against those who claim they do.

No Christian polemic against secularism can be

truly Christian if it does not recognize that liberal secularism was partly informed by a sense of justice which found the religiously sanctified social forms of the feudal order intolerable; and that Marxist secularism is partly informed by a sense of justice which found the religious and secular justifications of middle class justice intolerable. If these facts seem to belong to another age one need only mention Spain and possibly Italy and some Latin American countries to prove their relevance to contemporary scene. One might also mention the simple identification of bourgeois interests and Christianity in the Calvinist political parties of Holland.

A Christian apologetic must not simply be a defense of God against the godless but a disclosure of the Majesty of God against the pretensions of the godly and the godless and a promise of mercy to those who truly repent, whether godly or godless. The godless must know God before they can repent. Sometimes the "godly" have greater difficulty in repenting. For they have to unlearn their prayer: "I thank Thee God that I am not as other men."

R. N.

## Catholicism, Protestantism and the One Church

*The exchange of letters printed herewith between Father Daniélou, S.J., a French Jesuit Priest, and Professor Karl Barth is reprinted from the French Protestant journal RÉFORME. We reproduce it because of its obvious value in probing into the problems of relationship of Protestant churches and Catholicism.*

### Question to Karl Barth, by Father Daniélou

Our Protestant brothers who have been deeply grieved by the absence of Catholic observers at Amsterdam, do not perhaps know the passionate attention, and even the hopes and prayers with which innumerable Catholics have followed the developments of the ecumenical gathering. These Catholics were prevented from taking part in it by faithfulness to an inheritance which they know how to preserve with intransigence (even if their heart is thereby torn), not only for themselves but also for all their Christian brothers. At least they followed with fervor this movement toward unity for which they also are praying and working. And it should be known that the absence of Catholic observers at Amsterdam did not come from a lack of interest in ecumenicity, but on the contrary from the fact that the ecumenical trend is becoming so strong within

Catholicism that it needs to be directed and controlled so as not to fall into manifest exaggerations.

I have read with respect and profit the noble texts signed by such men as C. H. Dodd, Reinhold Niebuhr, Regin Prenter, E. Skydsgaard, E. Brunner, and Bishop Berggrav. And I felt I was in communion, beyond the persisting separation, with almost all the ideas which were there expressed. I felt myself to be with brothers in Christ. But words were spoken at Amsterdam which deeply wounded the Catholic heart, words of which one must say that they are not Christian, words wherein the division of churches is accepted with indifference, almost with joyful levity, words in which rings a sardonic laughter closer to Nietzsche than to Jesus. These are the words of Karl Barth when he declared: "I regret that you do not detest the Pope. . . . I hope that we are not disappointed by the fact that a cardinal, sent by the Vatican, has not come to sit down at our presidential table. . . . I propose to do without the useless tears that some are tempted to shed over the absence of Rome in our midst."

We have liked Karl Barth. We owe him much. We have always said so. We shall say it again. He has rediscovered values which are authentically biblical, and with Péguy, "we are in no way disposed

toward sadness in order to please some wretched bigots when we see truth come from a place from which we did not expect it." On the contrary we have seen a real beginning of ecumenicity in that actual communication of theological thinking among churches that are still separated from one another. We have liked Barth as the destroyer of a dogmatic liberalism which we accept no more than he. We have liked his tragic sense of the preacher's responsibility.

Therefore, if today we dare to tell him "no," it is with the suffering of a great hope which has been crushed. We cannot accept the joyful levity with which he admits division. We cannot accept it, not for reasons of sentiment, but because Barth's attitude seems to us to constitute a scandal. Not only because it ignores the Christian spirit, but also because it betrays the essence of Christianity. For such a joyful levity denies the seriousness of divine love, to use the words of Guardini.

The sense of Christian tragedy no longer exists when division is accepted. The sense of Christian tragedy exists when unity is not, while unity is possible precisely because there is Jesus Christ. Barth's too complacent acceptance of despair is here singularly flippant. He gloats over the worst as a justification of his own theories. One detects there some kind of self-satisfaction. One does not perceive there a submission to the Word of God.

Barth has scandalized us. Only one thing comforts us: he has also scandalized many of our Protestant brothers. Not only Catholicism but also Christianity here feels injury. We believe too much in the Christianity of Barth to think that he himself did not feel it.

### Karl Barth's Reply

Reverend Father:

The cleft within the unity of the church of Jesus Christ, manifested by the opposition between your church—the Roman Church—and the rest of Christendom is for all of us, for me as well as for you, a grievously afflicting and scandalous reality. Therefore it is good and normal that we become again today the object of the most acute reciprocal attention. We rejoice in any personal and objective contact, when, in a clearly delimited intention, Roman and non-Roman Christians and theologians are able to meet without any compromise or ambiguity.

A prayer for the resolving of our conflicts must be and remain the nerve of all reflection and all effort as far as the church is concerned. Since you seem to know me, at least by my books, I have the right to be astonished when you ascribe to me an attitude other than that which I have just recalled. The public accusation which you make against me in bitter terms is totally beyond my comprehension.

But the problem is elsewhere. The question is

concrete. Was it necessary to regret and deplore that the Roman Church refused to collaborate in the ecumenical movement, and was not represented at Amsterdam?

I have, indeed, vigorously stated at Amsterdam, that there was no ground for regretting or deploring this fact, but that we should discover and accept in it a clear way of God. Strangely enough, you accuse me of having expressed, with "a sardonic laughter closer to Nietzsche than to Jesus," and for the scandal of all good Christians, an indifference toward the question of an agreement between Rome and us, nay, even my satisfied acquiescence to disunity.

I say that this seems strange to me. For the absence of your church at Amsterdam was, indeed, due to a fact which is not new and which your church herself has clearly established. You, yourself, write that the Roman Christians "know how to preserve with intransigence" an inheritance in which they participate. This intransigence was bound to prevent them from sharing actually in our attempts. That is not your private opinion, for even the Pope has expressed himself several times in the same way and without any ambiguity. And you know as well as I do that he was obliged to do so, and that your church had necessarily to remain away from Amsterdam. For your church cannot sit down at the same table with the other "churches" in order to deliberate with them on the same level, with the same humility and the same freedom, on the question of unity in Christ. She cannot admit that the question of unity has not yet received an answer. This answer is furnished purely and simply by the existence of your church. She cannot do anything except to propose to us, finally and exclusively, to participate in that religious unity. She cannot do anything except to ask us to renounce our errors and our willful ignorances, and to take again the only possible path, that of a true comprehension of unity—in brief, to invite us to submit to the Roman See and to subscribe to the conclusions of the Council of Trent, even if these conclusions were somewhat modified, modernized, or softened for our use. How could your church be interested in our ecumenical cause, except as a possibility (perhaps offered) of bringing us back to Rome through some road or detour? For what object could you pray when you and, as you say, innumerable Roman Catholics, have accompanied with your intercession the Amsterdam gathering? I do not attempt to sound the hearts. But this does not prevent me from knowing that, as Christians, Roman priests or monks, you can truly pray only for the realization of that kind of unity, or perhaps for its preparation. Thus you could not in any case regret or deplore that your church was not represented at Amsterdam. You should have been certain of your cause: namely, that precisely from the Roman standpoint this representation was not possible. Rome would not be Rome if she had not



forbidden her faithful to be present at Amsterdam, or even if she had sent us some cardinal or other. On all this, precisely from your point of view—I do not say here anything truly new—there is nothing to deplore. On the contrary, precisely from your point of view, this decision had to be approved by the heart as well as by the mouth; and this is without doubt what you have done yourself.

And now you believe that we should deplore that which you could not deplore yourself without disobeying your own church! Allow us, Reverend Father, to be just as certain of our cause as you are of your own. We, on our side, could not deplore the absence of your church at Amsterdam because she excluded herself from our common search for unity in Jesus Christ, which is the sense of any ecumenical enterprise, on account of that which you, yourself, call her "intransigence." Among the churches represented at Amsterdam there were some which have of themselves a clear and rigorous consciousness. I rejoice to belong to one of these churches. But at Amsterdam, none of the churches presented itself before the others with the pretense of being the only salutary and infallible church, that is to say the church which would have already, in and by its own existence, found an answer to the question which we were asking together. In fact, we were facing one another as "denominations." This fundamental rule of our meeting and of our work would have been only ruined by a representation of your church—if we admit that on your side such a representation would not have been impossible. You could not have sat beside us, but only (visibly or invisibly) taken your seat on some throne, high and lifted up above our heads. Among the poor, the rich really have no place, no more than the sated among the hungry, no more than among pilgrims, one who has already, and with full assurance, reached the goal. You ask too much when you want us to take seriously your unconditioned pretense at superiority, and when you ask us to sigh after your presence! No! Your collaboration at Amsterdam would only have meant that you wished to incite us, in one way or another, to come back on the only road which according to you is possible. We were seeking there what the Kingdom of God is and what the work of God is. You would simply have been able to ask us to understand that we had to convert ourselves to the human kingdom and the human work of your church. Therefore at Amsterdam we would not have been able to pursue together our march toward the Lord of the church. The fact that we did not meet there was not for us a cause for regret but a good reality, recognizable as a clear will of God. In the search we pursued there in obedience to our faith you would have only disturbed and paralyzed us. Your absence has spared us a scandal and a temptation. That is what I felt obliged to state at Amsterdam in the face of the

sentimentality of some—they were of course not lacking!—who did not keep a clear mind or who were misinformed. Take my place for a moment! You are intelligent enough to admit that this affirmation on our part was just as necessary as, on your side, the affirmation of Pius XII and your own affirmation.

If on this point we agree from both sides, in all tranquillity and soberness, this will not in any way harm the cause of the unity about which I spoke at the beginning of this letter: its progress will thus be insured. Why, at the occasion of Amsterdam, would it not be salutary for us to rediscover that our conflict is always a little more serious than it appears to be in a situation generating enthusiasm? If there is any hope in this conflict, it cannot be for you as well as for me other than the hope of the triumph of Truth. But then, we must have the courage to look at one another at the place where we are, because for you and for us our duty is to be each in his own place. (Translation by Professor Samuel Terrien.)

## In Search of a Prophetic Voice

WILLIAM HORDERN

LIKE many ministers today, I am acutely aware of a problem as I step into the pulpit each Sunday. That problem is—"How can I speak a Prophetic Word in the midst of our present world situation?" I believe that the church must be prophetic for it was prophecy which first lifted the Hebrew faith above the other religions. Jesus chose to stand in the Prophetic line and he passed on to us the need to speak prophetically if we are to speak in His name. There is room for argument as to what extent a minister should be a prophet and to what extent he should be a priest, but few would deny that a prophetic note is necessary in every pulpit. But how can we speak a prophetic voice in a world of such conflicting loyalties and ambiguous claims to righteousness?

In one sense the question is simply the question that faces all liberal-minded men today: the question of finding a middle ground in the political-economic life of the times, the problem of walking a tight-rope over the chasm where war with Russia threatens on the one side and Communist domination on the other. But actually it is a different question. For in Prophetism there is a dimension that is unknown to the purely political sphere. The best answer, politically speaking, is not automatically the Prophetic answer.

There are some who would answer the question simply. Prophets are not man-made, therefore do not worry about being prophetic. If God speaks the Word to you, and only if God speaks, you will be a Prophet. However, carried to its logical conclusion, this reasoning would mean that we should never prepare our sermons. We should simply walk into the pulpit and wait for the Lord to speak to us. Martin Niemoeller tells of a German pastor who tried this. All through the sermon he uttered commonplaces and the voice of God did not speak. **Only as he left the pulpit** did the voice of God come to him and it said—"Hans, you've been lazy." It is true that there can be no true prophecy without the inspiration of God, but this ought not to lead to laziness. Actually the inspiration of God seems to come most often to those who search for it most diligently. "Seek and ye shall find."

Let us try to discover certain principles of prophecy and then apply these to the present scene.

In the first place, because the Prophetic Religion is ethical religion, the prophetic voice is always a voice of judgment. The great Prophets wasted no time in patting anyone on the back for their goodness, they were too concerned with blasting spiritual pride out of hiding to give anyone much comfort.

In the second place, this judgment is always pronounced primarily upon those who are listening. It is true that judgment is sometimes issued upon other people, but in the greatest of the Prophets this is never central. In the first two chapters of Amos, the Prophet does heap judgment upon the heads of neighboring nations, but it is clear that this is only to act as an introduction to his central purpose which is to condemn Israel whom he is addressing. From this it would seem to follow that there is no one prophetic voice for all times and places. The prophetic words that Jeremiah spoke to the people within the gates of besieged Jerusalem would not be prophetic if proclaimed to the besieging Assyrians.

In the third place, the prophetic word is always an unpopular word. In the Old Testament one of the surest ways of separating the true Prophets from the false was that the false Prophets were always popular. There is, of course, a danger here. Many is the minister who, finding that he has become unpopular, believes that he is prophetic when actually he is only stupid. A man may, if he has been a good pastor, preach prophetically without losing a single member of his congregation. The test of his prophecy lies in the fact that his people, although loyal to him, will be uncomfortable as they listen.

Fourthly, the prophetic message is, at least partly, social and political. The truly prophetic message is, of course, more than this, but one of the corner stones of the prophetic belief is that God is concerned with and active in history. The main difficul-

ties of being prophetic today lie in just this social realm and it is with them that we are dealing.

With these four principles, which do not necessarily exhaust the criteria of prophetic preaching, let us judge certain types of voices which are raised today with the claim of being prophetic.

One such type holds Russia to be a paragon of virtue and condemns American policy by contrast. Such voices certainly pass the test of unpopularity in this country but they fall short of being prophetic. The mantle of virtue which they cast about the shoulders of Russia will not bear inspection. The Old Testament Prophets often sounded like Fifth Columnists but they were not. Even as they proclaimed that the enemy was an agent of God by which their own country was to be destroyed, they kept a keen awareness of the shortcomings of that enemy and looked forward to the time when the judgment of God would also descend upon it.

Another voice that clamors to be heard today is one that exhausts its prophetic ardor in a condemnation of Communism and Russia. This type also fails to pass the test. Recently Karl Barth and Emil Brunner exchanged letters on the question of the church and Communism.\* Brunner demands of Barth why he has not said "No" to Communism with the same energy with which he said "No" to Nazism. Barth answers that the situation is different today. There was that in Nazism which formed a real temptation to the church. Because Christians were being perverted to Nazism it was necessary for the church to condemn it. But today there is not a similar temptation for Christians or the church to turn to Communism. Barth insists that he too could condemn Communism but such a condemnation would be cheap. Why should the church feel responsible, asks Barth, to say what anyone can read in his newspaper and what "Mr. Truman and the Pope are already saying so well." It seems to me that this is an almost unanswerable argument against accepting as prophetic a voice which, in this country, simply condemns Communism and blesses the cold war. Where Barth does go wrong is in applying this same principle to the church behind the Iron Curtain. There, it seems clear, the prophet has a different word to speak.

Still another type of voice claiming prophetic sanction today is that which calls upon us to love our enemies, to forgive Russia, whether the latter asks forgiveness or not, to sit down as brothers and solve our problems with goodwill and understanding. In a day when many voices that I once felt were prophetic are now only echoes of either Marshall or Molotov, I have a new respect for this sentimental Utopianism. However, we cannot hide the fact

\*For a review of these letters see *The Christian News Letter*, July 21, 1948.

that this type of Utopianism misses the complexity of the present international situation and commits the age-old mistake of trying to apply the absolute norms of the Sermon-on-the-Mount directly to the political situation.

Upon what road then shall we travel to find the true prophetic message for our time? This is not easy to answer, but certain points seem clear. First, a prophetic voice in this country must not be primarily an attack on Russia or Communism but must first pass judgment on Western policies. That this may give comfort to the Communists is irrelevant. Jeremiah and Isaiah gave considerable comfort to the enemies of their country and those enemies were no more righteous than Russia today. A Prophet can never afford to give his first allegiance to any country. Jeremiah loved Israel, he hated Assyria, and yet he spoke his condemnation of Israel at the very moment when it helped Assyria most. The point is that the comfort which the Prophet gives to the enemy is always a superficial one. When a Prophet condemns his own nation he does it, not from the standpoint of the enemy, but from the standard of God. By that same standard the enemy also stands condemned. If the Prophet does not cross the "t's" and dot the "i's" of this condemnation of the enemy it is because he has no chance of speaking directly to the latter. The Prophet's first duty is to speak to those who hear him.

The second line of approach seems to be that we who speak for the church must, while refusing to be Communist fellow-travellers, continually point to the fact that Communism is a judgment upon our own policies. The Old Testament Prophets saw the hand of God moving in Pagan Assyria, we must see it moving in "Godless" Russia. It is not sufficient to point to the fallacies and false hopes of the Communist regimes. We must also point to the fact that wherever Communism has or can come to power, first Christian Democracy has failed. When we realize that every advance of Communism is made over a bridge-head of Christian failure, then and only then will we understand the real threat of Communism.

Along some such lines as these, it seems to me, a prophetic voice must be fashioned today. Although a prophetic stand never needs to justify itself politically, the fact remains that in such a situation as we have today the prophetic stand may be the most practical of politics. Our present Western policies have lost us a great deal of the support we need in the battle against Communism. Large sections of the most advanced thinking and vital forces amongst the colored peoples of the world have already gone over to Communism while the West has maintained old modes of imperialism. More and more of the battles for independence from foreign rule which should be seen as parallel to America's Revolution

are taking on the form of Communist insurrection. Communism ultimately cannot be defeated by pouring out our resources in support of semi-fascist, unpopular regimes. A truly prophetic criticism of these policies could help to stop these fatal tendencies.

It is not easy to be prophetic today. It never has been. Yet the church must never cease in its attempts to be prophetic. No sure guideposts can be erected to guide the minister under all circumstances. Always there is a need for an inspiration from God for the Prophet must walk a narrow line. It is a narrow line between an otherworldly disregard for history and an acceptance of the political situation as of ultimate importance. It is a narrow line between being a traitor to one's country and being the best patriot of all. It is a narrow line that few men can walk without stumbling, none can walk it without the Grace of God.

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### Broadcasting and Church Attendance

In a recent article published in the "Church of England Newspaper," the Rev. Francis House, Head of Religious Broadcasting, replied to criticism that had been offered to the effect that people who could otherwise be in church stayed away to listen-in to broadcast services.

Mr. House stated that it has been established that on an average each Sunday more than a third of the adult population of Great Britain listen to at least one religious broadcast: that is to say, about 12 million adult listeners. After an analysis of these it is concluded that "putting it very crudely we can safely say that the combined audience for all Sunday religious broadcasts when analyzed according to sexes is found to include at least four million men, and when analyzed by age-groups at least eight million people under fifty."

Other analyses are considered to show that "at least three-quarters of those who listen to religious broadcasts on a typical Sunday will not have attended church that day." That means that "on any Sunday you like to take, about nine million 'non-churchgoers' will have tuned in a religious broadcast in the Home Service. This is from many points of view encouraging. It means that if we are asked about the religious situation in this country we have to take account of the fact that in addition to those who are active church people there is another substantial section of the population who show in this way that they look to the Christian faith for something—even if many do not quite know for what, and even if they do not outwardly show any active interest in the churches. . . .

"It is most important that week by week and year by year, the listening public are reminded that there is a 'worshipping community' in their midst, and hear the best broadcast preachers that can be found, proclaiming in the context of these services those fundamental truths of the Gospel which are the root and inspiration of all Christian worship."—*E.P.S., Geneva*



# The World Church: News and Notes

## Communism in China

At the time of the last meeting of the National Christian Council of China, there was still a gleam of hope for a peaceful settlement of the disputes between the Kuomintang dominated Government and the armed Communist Party. Today it looks as if this civil war must be fought to the bitter end. Two years ago our people thought that they would be spared from further sufferings after having gone through eight years of war with Japan. Instead, the people all over the country have been suffering tremendously from the terrible effects of the civil war. Especially is this true with those living in the war areas and areas close to the fighting scene. There we find ruthless destruction of property, killing of innocent people, illegal and unfair conscription, taking away foodstuffs without remuneration, widespread malnutrition, disease and starvation. Two years ago the economic situation was not too encouraging, but few people knew that it could become as bad and critical as it is today.

Morally and spiritually the situation is equally disheartening. An economy of scarcity is not conducive to unselfishness and generosity. Inadequate income is liable to produce dishonesty and corruption. Insecurity and uncertainty of the future encourages indulgence in monetary pleasure, speculation and taking chances. Bad laws do not inspire law-abiding citizenship. What do we find among our own people today? The young people feel frustrated and disillusioned while the old folks become cynical. The poor finds livelihood harder and harder while the rich tries to gather more wealth. The bad people turn lawless while the good men are indifferent. The reactionary becomes more intolerant; the radical goes wilder and more fanatic; and the liberal is impotent, unorganized and offers no leadership. What a sad picture this is!

The purpose of my pointing out these conditions is to remind ourselves of our faith that God is the loving Father of all people at all times and in all parts of the world, and that He must be deeply concerned with His children and their sufferings in China today. Furthermore, our Christian faith takes us back to the realization of the supreme sovereignty of God over all realms of life, and to the awareness of our need for discovering God's will in the present situation as it is related to us as individuals, and as the Christian church in China.

First, God must have a vital message for the Chinese people through the Christian Church today. That message surely is one of hope, and not one of despair. It must be a message calling for national repentance and offering divine deliverance.

Then, God must have great design for us individually and collectively which calls for action on our part. He must have something important for us to do at this moment. There is some part which we are called upon to play in the situation. It is our business to discover through His guidance what it is and to obey that guidance. We must not shirk our responsibility.

If in this Bi-ennial Meeting we could, through prayer, through meditation, and through corporate thinking, find

out God's will which is relevant to the present situation, and follow it, we would have accomplished the main purpose for which we have gathered here.

—Excerpts from address by Dr. S. C. Leung

## ELC Missionaries Endangered By Anti-Protestant Moves

Missionaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Duitama, Colombia, South America, have been forced to leave the city because of anti-Protestant demonstrations, Dr. Rolf A. Syrdal, executive secretary of the church's board of foreign missions, stated.

The Lutherans had been stoned and threatened with their lives for a period of six months before they evacuated, he reported.

Demonstrators, led by local anti-Protestant agitators and their local priest, attempted to demolish buildings, hurled insults at the women missionaries, hit the missionaries with rocks, and even ambushed one native worker, threatening to knife him. ELC missionaries had worked in the area for two years, conducting the only Lutheran work in the city.

While the Colombian constitution offers freedom of religion, and local and government officials offered protection, the ELC missionaries decided to withdraw for fear they would be killed or the demonstrators shot by police protectors. Before the incidents occurred, ELC mission work showed definite increase among the natives in the area.—National Lutheran Council

## Iraq Leader Sees 'Too Much Talk' About Holy Places

There has been "too much talk" about guarding the Holy Places in Palestine, Sayid Awni Khalidy, Iraq representative on the United Nations Trusteeship Council and delegate to the UN Assembly in Paris, told an Anglo-American press luncheon held in Paris.

"This fervor of Western peoples about the holiness of the Holy Places sounds curious to us, a people who gave to the West their religion," Khalidy declared. "It is not sufficiently realized that the holy shrines in Jerusalem are part and parcel of the life of the Arab people."

Asserting that "surely the West cannot teach the East in matters of morality and the soul," Khalidy declared that "very few people know the extent to which Christians and Moslems have cooperated through the ages to guard the Holy Places in Jerusalem."

"A sign of that guardianship," he said, "lies in the fact that the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem has always been entrusted to a Moslem family."

Khalidy said that because Arabs are "quite willing to, and capable of, guarding the Holy Places" they "read into persistent demands of some U.N. delegations to put Jerusalem under international rule a motive not wholly religious."

"It is our opinion," he added, "that Jerusalem itself is not the only sacred place in Palestine. All Palestine is sacred. There is hardly a spot which cannot boast of some event or connection with Christ and the great religious figures.—Religious News Service

# Christianity and Crisis

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## 66,000 Chinese Students Aided During Year

Nearly 66,000 Chinese university students received aid during the past year from the National Student Relief Committee, a project which has been sponsored jointly by the National YMCA and the National YWCA since 1937.

The hardships of the needy Chinese student during the late world war were severe, but in the opinion of many close to such work, his plight is worse now than it was then. Many have lost all contact with their families for four, five or six years, and the university is the only home they have.—NATALIE HANKEMEYER, *Religious News Service Correspondent*

## Sentence of Anti-Clerical Publisher Upheld

Italy's Court of Appeals has confirmed the conviction of Camillo Porreca, who was found guilty by a lower court of committing an "offense against the religion of the State" by reprinting anti-clerical books.

Porreca was sentenced to seven months' imprisonment in November, 1947, under Article 402 of the Italian penal code, as revised in 1930, soon after the signing of the Vatican-Italy concordat. The reprints he published were part of a book series called "Anti-clerical Thought."

During the trial, Porreca's lawyer contended that the defendant was condemned under laws made during the fascist regime. He argued that no pre-existing Italian code had ever referred to "offenses against the religion of the State," but only to "offenses against the freedom of conscience."—*Religious News Service*

## Israel Chief Rabbi Deplores Dr. Fisher's Stand

Chief Rabbi Isaac Herzog, in Jerusalem, expressed "deep sorrow" over a recent statement by Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, urging that Jerusalem be placed under international control.

"It is inconceivable," Rabbi Herzog declared, "that the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth be followed by virtual decapitation through separation from its spiritual capital, which is also the focus of religious sentiment among world Jewry."

Dr. Herzog asserted that the bulk of Jerusalem's population is Jewish and the city has for decades been the seat of Jewish representative bodies.

He suggested that arrangements could be made for international control of Moslem and Christian Holy Places and for giving them an extra-territorial status, although "Jewish tradition stresses the sanctity of the whole city."

"Surely," Dr. Herzog added, "the nations will not deprive us of the restored sanctuary of the Jewish spirit."

—*Religious News Service*

## Czech Church Wants Change In World Council Basis

Hope for an eventual change in the theological basis for membership in the World Council of Churches that would permit his denomination to join the international organization was expressed by Dr. Frank Kovar, in Prague, patriarch of the Czechoslovak Church.

Churches which belong to the World Council, Dr. Kovar explained, must subscribe to belief in Christ's divinity, but the Czechoslovak Church rejects the traditional trinitarian view of God because it feels it to be "a sort of tri-theism."

He said that the World Council is described as "a fellowship of churches which accept Our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior," but explained the Czechoslovak Church would regard it instead as a fellowship which accepts Christ simply as "Lord and Savior."

Meanwhile, Dr. Kovar declared, leaders of the Czechoslovak Church "will continue to follow with great interest the movement for world church cooperation, and want to keep on receiving literature from the World Council."—*Religious News Service*

## Author in This Issue

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